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Doctors in Kentucky, California Received Millions in Bonus Payments for Vaccinating Medicaid Patients Against COVID

Documents reveal that the federal government and insurers incentivized healthcare providers in Kentucky and California to vaccinate Medicaid patients against COVID-19 by offering bonuses based on the percentage of patients successfully vaccinated.

By **Brenda Baletti, Ph.D.**

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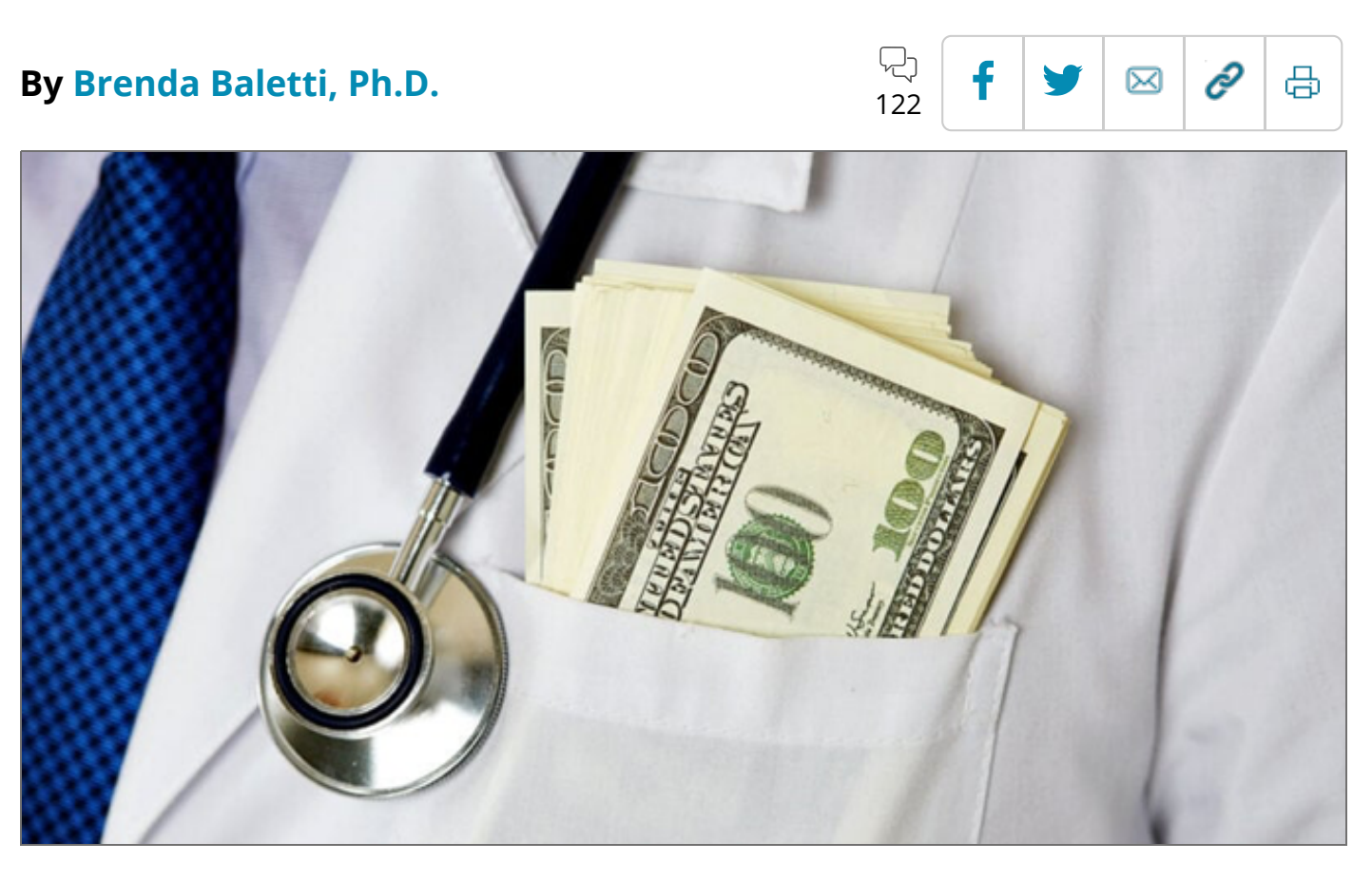

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The federal government and insurers incentivized healthcare providers in Kentucky and California to vaccinate Medicaid patients against COVID-19 by offering bonuses based on the percentage of patients successfully vaccinated.

"[This is] truly sickening and I am embarrassed for my profession by this," Dr. Meryl Nass, an internist and biological warfare epidemiologist, wrote on her Substack, where she posted several documents relating to the COVID-19 vaccine provider incentive programs. (See Nass' posts here, here, here and here.)

The documents help to draw a picture of the broader effort at the federal, state and local levels to unleash a range of strategies targeting low-income and people-of-color communities, which tended to have lower vaccination rates.

The strategies included providing hundreds of millions of dollars for the creation of "culturally tailored" pro-vaccine materials and for training "trusted" and "influential messengers" to promote COVID-19 and flu vaccines to communities of color in every state.

Nass' revelations showed these efforts went beyond advertising, fear campaigns, payments to patients and payments to trusted community actors and included, in some cases, direct financial incentives to healthcare providers.

Kentucky: Medicaid paid doctors up to $250 per vaccinated Medicaid patient

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Medicaid in Kentucky told physicians in 2021 it would "recognize your hard work by offering incentives for helping patients make the choice to become vaccinated."

The more people vaccinated, the higher the per-person incentive.

For physicians who treated an Anthem Medicaid cohort with a minimum of 25 patients in their practice, Anthem Medicaid offered incentives for vaccination by Sept. 1, 2021, that ranged from a $20 bonus per vaccinated person for physicians who vaccinated 30% of the cohort, to $125 per vaccinated person for those who vaccinated 75% of the cohort, with several incremental steps in between.

As time went on, the rates increased.

Between Sept. 1 to Dec. 31, 2021, physicians received payments ranging from $100 per newly vaccinated person for those who vaccinated 30% of their patient cohort, to $250 per newly vaccinated person for those who vaccinated 75% of their patient cohort.

In 2022, the Anthem provider incentive program changed to a flat rate. Providers received $50 per newly vaccinated Medicaid patient. This included children ages 6 months to 4 years and kids 12 and older vaccinated between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2022, and children ages 5 to 11 vaccinated between June 1 and Dec. 31, 2022.

Medi-Cal: $350 million in incentives to vaccinate low-income children, people of color

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) on Aug. 6, 2021, announced $350 million in incentive payments — $250 million to providers and $100 million for direct non-monetary payments, such as gift cards, to vaccine recipients — to encourage vaccination among Medi-Cal's 14 million beneficiaries.

Of the $350 million, $175 million came from state general funds and $175 million from federal funding. The funding period lasted from Sept. 2, 2021, through Feb. 29, 2022.

The program offered incentives to managed care plans in the name of "health equity." In the press release, DHCS Director Will Lightborne said that raising rates among Medi-Cal beneficiaries was essential because "California will only be safe when everyone is safe."

Nass noted that this program was rolled out one day after Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle Walensky told CNN the vaccines don't prevent virus transmission. "That's clearly a contradiction," Nass told The Defender.

The funding targeted Medicaid recipients with low vaccine uptake — the homebound, communities of color, youth ages 12 to 25 and people ages 50 to 64 with multiple chronic conditions — and incentivized outreach and vaccination activities for providers and pharmacies.

At the time of the announcement, only 45.6% of Medi-Cal beneficiaries age 12 and over had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, compared to over 76% of Californians overall.

The DHCS funding included payments to community-based organizations, food banks, advocacy groups and faith-based organizations. This key strategy of funding grassroots leaders to act as "grassroots" proxies spreading the federal government's vaccine message was widespread throughout the pandemic.

Providers could also couple this grant with a CAIRVaxGrant, which offered providers up to $10,000 to enter all of their historical electronic health record immunizations into the California Immunization Registry (CAIR).

The grant stipulated that after startup costs, payments would be directly tied to "meeting specific vaccination goals," similar to the Kentucky program.

The incentive payment structure under the California plan was complex, paying a financial reward to healthcare providers who met particular benchmarks that varied by county and demographic but overall increased the percentage of vaccinated patients among their Medicare beneficiaries.

Under this incentive structure, providers had to meet particular vaccination targets in order to get paid. Those who were especially successful in increasing vaccination rates in the target groups would be entered into a "high performance pool," receiving extra money for substantially moving the vaccination rates for Medicaid recipients 75% higher than baseline or within 10% of a given county's general rate.

In the equation that determined the incentive payment structure, different demographic groups were weighted differently. For example, vaccine recipients ages 12 to 25 were weighted more highly than older recipients and those in the two racial/ethnic groups with the lowest uptake were also given greater weight.

By Jan. 21 of this year, despite this $250 million push, Medi-Cal vaccination had only increased to 52.9%.

Medicaid pays doctors more to administer COVID vaccines than other shots

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act, the Biden administration fully funded the COVID-19 vaccination program, making vaccines free regardless of health insurance status.

To cover the costs of the uninsured and underinsured, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) paid provider costs of vaccine administration through an Uninsured Program and a COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund.

Reimbursements were based on national Medicare rates, but the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which sets those rates, increased the reimbursement rate over time. Through March 14, 2021, HRSA paid $28.93 for a single-dose vaccine or for the second dose in a series of 2, and $16.94 for the first dose in a series of two.

On March 15, 2021, those rates increased to $40 per dose and $75.50 for an "in-home" dose of the vaccine.

Nass said the initial payments were in line with Medicaid payments for other vaccines, but the increased payment marked a departure from the usual reimbursement structure.

Usually, all CMS changes to Medicare payments for specific services must go through notice and comment rulemaking, but "to save time during the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency bypassed that route before increasing payments for administering the vaccines," JAMA reported.

CMS said the higher payments were meant to help expand COVID-19 vaccination, supporting "actions taken by providers, such as growing existing vaccination sites, conducting patient outreach and education, and hiring additional staff," Healthcare Finance News reported.

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Brenda Baletti, Ph.D.

Brenda Baletti Ph.D. is a reporter for The Defender. She wrote and taught about capitalism and politics for 10 years in the writing program at Duke University. She holds a Ph.D. in human geography from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's from the University of Texas at Austin.

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2 • Share Best Newest Oldest

CAE71
7 days ago

The minute a doctor mentioned that MRNA jab to me, I knew they were being paid off...2 years ago... I asked him if he did research on me and my biological makeup to suggest such a ridiculous farce. He gave a "STUPID STARE". I told him if you mention that to me again, I will sue you.

I'm not even given a decent diet to lost weight or have my real questions answered but they recommend the death shot?

Be very afraid of these puppets...they are obviously not here to help you live your best life, or give you any insight into your health. When was the last time these jokers looked up your symptoms in a Medical Journal or did any kind of research, on a symptoms? The light is shining on medical malfeasance and that the medical complex is a kill mill for incentives and it's not that great compared to other countries.

We are paying money to be treated like that? This is what Medicare and Medicaid have to offer the people of this country? Be aware that any PPO or Medical plan, doesn't give a Rat$a$$ about their patients they are servicing. Saving money number one priority. I say, "Get out of the medical field if you can't offer real healing and answers."

48 0 Reply • Share ›

Ricky Ricardo → CAE71
7 days ago

I won't go anywhere near a doctor anymore! Puppets; one and all. Do they even know what they are injecting into people; I.E., Synthetic Spike Protein and PEG and all kinds of genetic nasty stuff, all wrapped up in a Lipid Nanoparticle. Anyone telling their patient that they are receiving a covid "vaccine", that will "protect them", should be sued for everything they have. Of course that will never happen, because we live in an upside down world!

20 1 Reply • Share ›

YogicCowboy → Ricky Ricardo
5 days ago

I began as a Biology major, with the possibility of going to medical school. Ironically, my own lifelong health problems - rarely improved by allopathic medicine - prevented that.

After near death, I stopped going to medical doctors - for anything. That was more than twenty years.

If I break a bone, then I will go to one to have it set (assuming I was not required to accept any medication, especially not any mRNA injection). They are adequate for that sort of straightforward, essentially mechanical, function.

8 0 Reply • Share ›

ch21014 → CAE71
7 days ago

Big Pharma isn't interested in curing people and our politicians and doctors are controlled by Big Pharma. Just look up the people who sit on the boards of the Pharma companies and their links to the CDC and FDA. All the drugs Big Pharma offer are just maintenance drugs to keep your symptoms under control, at best. None of the drugs they offer are cures.

10 0 Reply • Share ›

Leslie Taylor → ch21014
6 days ago

Here's an excellent video that reveals "Who Owns the World" and how they are doing it and have been for a very long time. It clearly points out the horrible state of the world: the wars, the famine and poverty and environmental destruction that they've orchestrated. He doesn't go into their future plans to further enslave by horrifically merging man and machine. Something many will go along with given all the terrible health problems and debilitations from the mRNA injections, those that survive that is. Some things are worse than a disability or death. If you think you know this already, it's well worth review. Please watch.
https://rumble.com/v270rja-...

4 0 Reply • Share ›

brbg → Leslie Taylor
5 days ago

You are correct. The globalists own the world and are tightening the chains on all of us.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

notaluvvie → CAE71
7 days ago

You need somebody to tell you how to lose (sic) weight? Here's a clue: eat less and get out and exercise. Ten years ago I was 118kg, now I'm 68kg. And regardless of what you see on TV while not exercising, Trulicity is not a weight loss magic bullet, it's a diabetes treatment.

4 1 Reply • Share ›

Dan → notaluvvie
7 days ago

That was mean-spirited. Heck, you admit you had a weight problem at one time too . . you missed the whole point of the post which is that the medical establishment has only their agenda of meeting the quotas and getting paid incentive $$$ for these bioweapon shots and depopulation.

12 0 Reply • Share ›

Ricky Ricardo → notaluvvie
7 days ago edited

Eating less, is not the answer. It's **what** you eat that matters. People should not be eating **any** ultra processed food - at all! Even non-GMO fruits and vegetables are sprayed liberally with toxic chemicals such as glyphosate (and many more). The worst, are the grains - cereals. Not only are they sprayed after planting; in many cases, the seeds themselves are already coated and during harvest, the bundles are drenched in glyphosate to desiccate the plants to dry them out and get them to market sooner. $$$! Organic isn't perfect; but it's always the better choice - while it lasts.

9 0 Reply • Share ›

BarbaraCharis → Ricky Ricardo
6 days ago

You are 100% right. One can lose weight eating more of the right bulky high fiber organic fruits and vegetables, which keep the intestinal tract open. If one counts calories and does not eat enough food - it will be hard to lose. The secret is to keep the food being consumed moving through the intestinal tract. In order for the food to move...there has to be enough food going through the body to push the previous meal forward. So, if one is eating too little food and it just sits in the intestines...one will not lose weight. Grains are used for bulking up cattle...and do the same in the human species.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Ricky Ricardo → BarbaraCharis
6 days ago

Very intelligent post! Also; people drink 1% milk or 1% yogurt... (probably with a bag of Doritos) Imagine the processing that goes into that "fat" reduction. I drink 3.5% Organic milk and eat tubs of 3.5% Organic yogurt and I'm underweight! Eating healthily should not be "rocket science". Do I even have to mention staying fit through regular exercise? I'm in my 70's and with all the Full Fat products I eat, including 4 organic eggs each day (real food); I don't have an ounce of fat on my body.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

BarbaraCharis → Ricky Ricardo
6 days ago

My son visited me...and he was drastically underweight...6' 130 lbs. I started feeding him and in one month he gained 15 pounds. Every morning I gave him bananas and other fruit; lunch large salad; and in the evening yams , green beans and lots of butter. One of my favorite books is The 80-10-10 Diet, which was written by Doug Graham, D.C He was a former coach of the New York Knicks. He had the players on his program with excellent results.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Ricky Ricardo → BarbaraCharis
5 days ago

I know a lot about nutrition and exercise. Unfortunately, I have no teeth to chew my food with (long story), so I just do the best I can. I'll never get back up to my ideal weight; although, I've managed to stay above 130lbs for about a month now; usually around 136-38. I went down to 120lbs at one point, a few years ago; so, I'm quite content with where I am, currently.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

brbg → notaluvvie
5 days ago

Correct. We all must stop accepting drugs from Big Pharma unless absolutely necessary. They do not have the public's welfare as a priority.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

BraveNewWhirled → CAE71
2 days ago

I can witness their insurance agent does care. We try to be a guiding light through the darkness many of them experience. It's too bad their insurance often does not cover things that actually work.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

ME MCC → CAE71
2 days ago

Felt bad enough that I went to the doctor in January. Sinus infection? Flu? I had no idea, but if I could get something to improve, I was all for it. Anyway, first thing she wanted to do was test me for "covid." I told her no. She kept insisting because I had "symptoms." I told her no - that I had about as much chance of having the actual "covid" as I had of flipping a coin on the ground and heads, covid, tails, negative. I asked what she would do then. She told me that even if it was negative, she could diagnose me with it because I had symptoms. I responded that I had symptoms of a lot of things - cold, flu, sinus infection - I would not take the "covid" test but would take any other. Long story short, Type A flu. She would not treat me at all because I had refused the covid test - she told me that ahead of time (that she wouldn't treat me with anything if I didn't submit to the test). I'm DISGUSTED by the medical "profession." If I did my job like they have done, I'd have been fired immediately! Btw, I fired her immediately for me.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Inga Brereton
7 days ago

With everything that is now emerging about the toxicity of many of these 'jabs', shouldn't these doctors be investigated for unprofessional conduct? How many of their victims were notified of their right to give 'informed consent'??

27 0 Reply • Share ›

byhislove → Inga Brereton
7 days ago

I just read that Burden budgeted more money to create more vaccines or new ones or something...Im so sick of this, that it depresses me to read anything anymore.

5 0 Reply • Share ›

FreedomORBust → Inga Brereton
7 days ago edited

My stupid ass pcp is still wearing a face diaper. And a NAZI for me to wear one. Thank god i only use her for a PE form to to get T3. She's obese to boot. You'd love to read The Quimby Manuscripts.

5 0 Reply • Share ›

MontanaMuleGal → FreedomORBust
2 days ago

At least you can still get T3. Many PCPs don't know squat about the bogus thyroid tests, and will deny hypothyroid patients an adequate dose or, more commonly, any thyroid medication whatsoever. [And, as you obviously know, Synthroid is not adequate thyroid medication.]

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Ricky Ricardo → Inga Brereton
7 days ago

That was in the old abnormal. This is the New Abnormal. The "authorities" are all paid off!

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Jg 1234 → Inga Brereton
7 days ago

Sounds like lawsuits should commence. Perhaps they were paid enough money to compensate for being sued.

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Paul Vonharnish → Jg 1234
6 days ago edited

Hello Jg 1234: Wrong. Lawsuits are designed to stuff the pockets of **ambulance chasers**, not attorneys practicing criminal Law. These "medical" personnel were engaged as Accessories to murder, period. Their names should be known to friends and families of the deceased. States Attorneys General are also Accessorizes after the fact.

They took an Oath of fiduciary responsibility to consistently uphold the Laws of the United States. Not to sit in an office with bogus BAR Association diplomas hanging on the walls...

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Karen Bracken
7 days ago

So basically the American tax payer paid to incentivize these doctors. Again, we pay for our own demise.

18 0 Reply • Share ›

Suzy → Karen Bracken
2 days ago

And then we pay for more toxic "care" to "take care of" the harms we paid them to do to us in the first place, and that only exacerbates the situation so you have to go back for more. What a business plan!! Get off the wheel of the medical industrial complex if you want to get and stay healthy.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

ch21014 → Karen Bracken
7 days ago

Unfortunately, this is true.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

maxwell smart
7 days ago

Prescription drugs are almost always poison to the human body.

16 0 Reply • Share ›

robertsgt40 → maxwell smart
7 days ago

Does anyone know how much Gov Cuomo made offing 1000s of seniors in assisted living?

5 0 Reply • Share ›

Suzy → robertsgt40
2 days ago

He at least saved his state's budget the continuing cost of Social Security and Medicare for all those senior he offed. I'm sure it was a huge amount, which he then could spend on more ventilators to kill more people.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

trade0714 → maxwell smart
7 days ago

ALL prescription drugs are, to some degree -- some much more than others -- toxic to humans.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

DLT88
7 days ago

Another reason not to trust MDs anymore. They are making a profit out of poisoning us and killing us. Pharmacists were also paid hundreds of dollars in bonuses for talking someone in to getting those deadly shots when they came into CVS.

16 0 Reply • Share ›

CastleConnell → DLT88
7 days ago

I actually think that doctors are simply pharmacists with permission to prescribe the drugs they peddle for pharma!

10 0 Reply • Share ›

YogicCowboy → CastleConnell
5 days ago

I realized the truth 30 years ago: Most "medical doctors" are technicians, not physicians.

Their schooling is controlled by Big Pharma. They are indoctrinated in unnatural, artificial, *patent-for-profit* modalities - cut, burn, and drug - that often harm and seldom heal. Few of them ever question that indoctrination.

Hippocrates would never be granted a medical license in today's America.

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Brian Collecott → CastleConnell
6 days ago

My local pharmacist is far smarter than my Doc.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Clare Goldsberry
7 days ago

As a journalism teacher once told our college class about investigational journalism: Follow the money!"
I've said it for the past 3 years: It's NOT about health and safety -- it's about power/control and money. I've been right all along!

15 0 Reply • Share ›

CastleConnell → Clare Goldsberry
7 days ago

When people have too much power, assuming the worst is not a stretch!

5 0 Reply • Share ›

Ricky Ricardo → Clare Goldsberry
7 days ago

I'm not criticising you; but I've always seen it as a formula: Money = Power = Control...no control without power and no power without money; Big Money! They've been doing quite well with the control over the past few years. If anyone thinks it's all "winding down" - guess again!

4 0 Reply • Share ›

Kevin Bradley → Ricky Ricardo
6 days ago

Well stated. It's a plutocracy/oligarchy and the plutocrats/oligarchs are now driving for total control on a global level. They've only taken their foot off the pedal momentarily.

4 0 Reply • Share ›

Ricky Ricardo → Kevin Bradley
6 days ago

The calm before the storm!

4 0 Reply • Share ›

byhislove → Clare Goldsberry
7 days ago

As a previous journalist, I agree yet...even my family members think that I am Waco...like I don't know how to vet for the truth and reality (did that work internationally for 11 years). Now my daughter is becoming a Soro's fan. God help us all.

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Polly Green
7 days ago

And zero liability risks. Only in the good ol' US of A, right?

10 0 Reply • Share ›

CastleConnell → Polly Green
7 days ago

I think this corruption is occurring in other countries that copy the U.S.

4 0 Reply • Share ›

Brian Collecott → CastleConnell
6 days ago

I think a lot of UK GPs are running on misplaced trust. Certainly many don't question what they are told regarding medicines.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

gorgegirl999 → Polly Green
7 days ago

Pretty sure the zero liability is universal for covid shots

3 0 Reply • Share ›

BChristine
7 days ago

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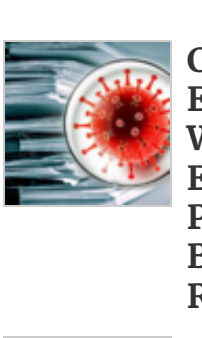

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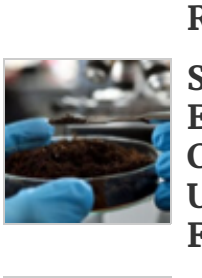

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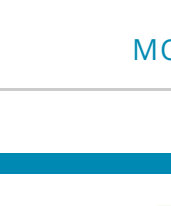

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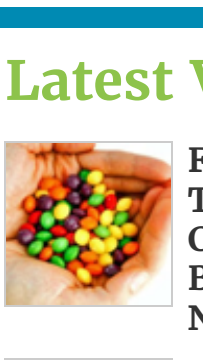

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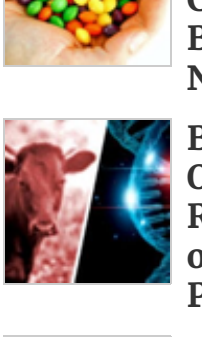

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